

BE RESOURCEFUL. DO IT YOURSELF.

HOW TO KILL PHANTOM LOADS

A phantom load is the electricity consumed by an appliance or electronic device when it is turned off. With most of these appliances, "off" does not really mean "off." Electric current is still flowing to keep the device or appliance in standby "ready" mode. Phantom loads make up about 7% of our national energy use and most people don't even know it! Common examples of appliances and devices that have phantom loads include televisions, DVD players, cable boxes, stereos, coffee makers, microwave ovens, toasters, laptop chargers, hair dryers, and cell phone chargers. All of these devices consume energy, even while they are in the "off" mode. Appliances with phantom loads are sometimes called "vampires" because the black plug with two teeth acts as a vampire and sucks energy while it is plugged into the outlet.

A simple way to kill phantom loads is to purchase a power strip or Smart Strip. Most homes only need 1 or 2 of each to reduce unwanted energy usage.

Necessary steps to kill your phantom loads:

- 1. <u>Identify your phantom loads</u>: Phantom loads are all appliances or devices with remote controls, continuous digital display, and plug in chargers such as cell phones, iPods, and laptop computers, etc. You may want to check out a free energy meter at the public library to help identify appliances and electronics that use electricity when turned off.
- 2. <u>Identify clusters of phantom loads</u>: After you have identified the number of phantom loads in your home, go back and take note of where clusters of phantom loads exist. Common phantom load clusters include computer stations, stereo and television systems, and counter top kitchen appliances.

3. The proper power strip: The power strip you purchase must have an "all on - all off" power switch. Use this switch to cut the phantom load. Smart Strips are an effective alternative to regular power strips. When you plug in a

Estimated Energy Savings Breakdown:

Energy savings/year: 2,000 kWh

Initial Cost: \$12-\$50

DI4 Labor: 2 hours

CO2 Reduction: 3,003 pounds

Cost savings/year: \$200

Energy Source: Electricity

10 year savings: \$2,000



ABOVE: REGULAR POWER STRIP

BELOW: SMART STRIP



television, stereo, DVD player, and gaming device to the Smart Strip, the Smart Strip automatically cuts power to the devices that are turned off (i.e. DVD player) for you once the television is turned off. The type of strip you choose should depend on your willingness to manually turn off the power strip every time you leave the room

- 4. <u>Purchase the necessary number of power strips</u>: The number of phantom load clusters in your home will be equal to the number of power strips you need to purchase. Power strips can be purchased at most local hardware and home center stores. If you are not finding what you are looking for such as Smart Strips, look online.
- 5. <u>Install your new power strips</u>: Beginning with your first cluster of phantom loads, make electricity your appliance sure that all of the appliances are in the "off" position. Identify all of the cords that are plugged into the wall and unplug them one by one. Plug the power strip into an available outlet and begin plugging in all of the cords into the power strip. You may consider leaving certain devices such as satellite and cable boxes that require continuous connection for programming out of your clusters. They will need to upload each time power is cut.
- 6. <u>Continue installing your remaining power strips</u>: Follow the directions provided in Step 5 and continue installing your remaining power strips where electronic clusters still exist.

NOTE: Make sure that all cube-shaped transformers are plugged into a power strip; they waste 60-80% of their load when left continuously plugged directly into a wall. These are your chargers (cell phones, iPods, laptops, etc).

7. <u>Killing the phantom load</u>: Now that you have replaced a cluster of cords with a power strip, you can successfully kill your phantom load by simply switching the power strip's ON/OFF switch each time you want to turn on your television system, stereo system, or computer, etc. Remember, after you are finished using your electronic system, turn the appliance off as well as the power strip.





Materials are covered by manufacturers' warranties only. Please follow manufacturers' instructions for the use of any particular product. The City of Flagstaff is not liable for any damages, injury, or expense incurred in connection with this program.



Check out a free energy meter from the public library to view how much electricity your appliances